



# THE RARA RAG

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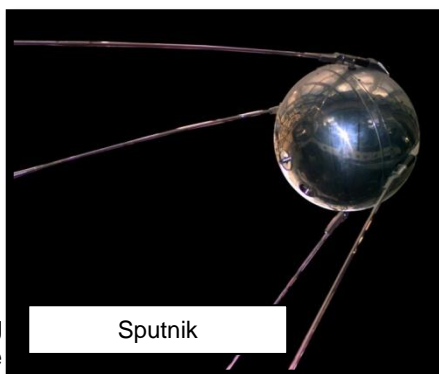
December 2010

NO. 4

## Beam Me Up, Scottie!

By Bill Marinucci, WB2GHC  
Vice-President, RARA

Ever since SPUTNIK, a whole new world of communications has come into reality, right out of the space comic books of yester-year. We now find ourselves with a populated space station and a very large number of satellites orbiting our planet. These satellites provide us with GPS capabilities, satellite TV/Radio, satellite telephones, spy and military satellites, and amateur radio satellites, among others. It just so happens that there are some ham radio operators aboard the space station who love to get on the air.



Sputnik

We are in for a real treat this month....The hams of the RIT Amateur Radio Club, K2GXT, have graciously accepted our invitation to do a presentation at the next RARA meeting, on December 3, 2010. It's all about ham radio and satellite communications.

Our presenters will cover many aspects of satellite communications, from the basics of satellite operation to the tools of the trade, making contacts via satellites, and using your equipment to the fullest. They will also explain what the K2GXT club has done, their members, and plans to upgrade their satellite communication system.

The gang at K2GXT is also looking forward to sharing some of their on the air actual experiences, which should prove to be fascinating at the least.

It will be out of this world!!



Oscar 10

## This month in the RaRa RAG...

Meeting Topic .....	1
Prez Sez .....	2
Calendar of Events .....	2
Letter from the Editor .....	3
VE News .....	3
Ham Tech: QSL Bureau .....	4
Skywarn .....	5
Member Spotlight.....	5
Rochester Hamfest .....	6
Raffle Prizes.....	9
Picture Puzzler.....	10
RaRa Academy.....	11
RaRa Online .....	13
Scanner Listening .....	14
MC RACES / ARES News ....	15
Foxhunt Results .....	15
20 Years Ago .....	17
RaRa Officers .....	18
Area Club Contacts.....	18
Directions to Meeting .....	18

## RARA Meeting Dec. 3, 2010 7:30PM

Henrietta Fire Co. #1  
3129 East Henrietta Rd. (15A)



## The Prez Sez

By Frank Schramm, WB2PYD  
President, RaRa

I hope the beginning of the Holiday Season finds you all well and well prepared. I know how trying these times can be for some. If you find yourself overwhelmed, lock yourself in your shack and work some DX!

Last month I found myself hard pressed for a topic to write about and this month I have so much to tell you it may not all fit in a reasonable space so here goes:

First things first – Mark your calendars for Saturday January 29<sup>th</sup>. You won't want to miss the RaRa Cabin Party and Chili cook-off. We will be at the Hazelwood Grove Lodge in Ellison Park ([click here for a map](#)). This is a party for members and their family – just one more reason to belong to RaRa! You can expect to spend the afternoon enjoying good food and friends in front of a roaring fire. Tell the kids bring their sleds if there's snow on the ground. So let me tell you about this Chili competition... We will present the 1<sup>st</sup> place winner of the chili cook-off with \$50.00! Second place will receive \$25.00 and third place will receive 30 RaRa Membership Rewards Points (see below). There will be a \$5.00 entry fee for each chili submitted for the competition, and judging will be by all who attend. Everyone will vote for their favorite, and the chili with the most votes will win. AND... we'll have a dessert competition too! Same rules and prizes apply. So break out those secret recipes and enter as many times, and as many chilis as you want: hot, mild, with meat, without, etc... it's all up to you! There are only 4 burners at the cabin so be sure to bring your crock pot or hot plate. Festivities start at noon and we'll have plenty of bread and beverages to round out the meal.

Secondly, we've dotted the I's, crossed the T's and we're ready to announce the details of the RaRa Membership Rewards program. It's all quite simple – any member who performs a service for the club will be rewarded with points. The points are accruable, then redeemable towards things like dues, dinner, gift certificates, and merchandise. I ask you: "How cool is that?" For example – Submit an original article to the RAG\* and receive 5 points. Make a presentation at one of our monthly meetings and receive 30 points. Volunteer to work a public service event and earn 5 to 10 points (depending on the event). Volunteer to staff the RaRa booth at the Rochester Museum & Science Center or any of the upcoming summer public relations events and receive 5 points. Once you earn points you'll want to redeem them. Points do not expire as long as your membership is valid (a lapse in your membership will reset your points balance) and you can save them up towards any redemption objective. For example: 50 points will get you a sumptuous dinner at our annual Banquet (see below), 30 points can be redeemed for one year's membership dues, 20 points for a baseball cap with the RaRa logo, and 5 points for a RaRa patch. Other redemption items include ARRL gift certificates, ARRL membership dues, and other RaRa logo items like coffee cups, and clothing. A comprehensive list is available on the club website under [Benefits of Membership](#).

Lastly, as you should already know we have an annual summer picnic for members and their families. This event has been growing in popularity and attendance over the past few years and that has led us to add the aforementioned January winter Cabin Party / Chili cook-off to the agenda. Your Board of Directors has also revisited the annual Banquet. While we have had an annual banquet in the past, it has always been tied to the Hamfest and over the years has taken on a reputation of some kind of elitist dinner. Let's kill that notion right here and now, that's all in the past – RIP. Commencing in the fall of 2011, we will have a club Banquet for YOU - all RaRa members and their guests. A radical notion, I know: It's your club, your dues, and YOUR banquet. While plans for this event are still being developed, we envision this to be a buffet style dinner, for variety, catered at a prominent hotel or the likes thereof. By redeeming membership points we expect a large number of members will have the opportunity to attend at little or no cost. So start earning your points today – sign up for a stint at the RMSC Holiday event.

73, and HAPPY HOLIDAYS!  
Frank, WB2PYD

\*Contact the RAG Editor for guidelines.

## Calendar of Events

- Dec 3** RaRa General Meeting – 7:30 PM  
Henrietta Fire Hall,  
3129 E. Henrietta Rd
- Dec 8** RaRa Board of Directors  
5:30 PM, RIT  
Bldg-17, Room 2110
- Dec 18** RaRa VE Testing sessions  
10:00 AM, RIT  
Bldg-9, Room 3139

## Rag-Chew

Editor's Thoughts & Comments  
By Kevin Carey, WB2QMY

Welcome to your December issue! We have a new feature this month written by local scanning expert Jim Sutton, W2OPS. Jim explains what's going on locally in the migration to digital modes, and how you can still follow the action. Be sure to tell Jim what other topics you'd like to see along the lines of local monitoring. Things have certainly changed from the days when you could just plug a few crystals into your scanner and hear what you wanted to, but it is still possible to follow along if you're up to date on receiving techniques. We hope you will enjoy this article, and we also welcome others dealing with services between the ham bands. If you have interest and expertise in these areas, please contact me.



I've had a few members ask about ways to print their newsletter more economically. First and foremost, the PDF format of the *Rag* is meant to be an *electronic resource*. As such, it is optimized for on-screen viewing. However, I also understand that some readers still prefer to read from paper, or to store their newsletters in paper form. I encourage you to think about the benefits of electronic storage and reading of the *Rag*, including not having loose papers around, the ability to search for words/topics, better clarity of photos, full color imaging, and saving of ink!

Nevertheless, if you still wish to print out your *Rag* each month, here are some paper and ink-saving ideas, which can be accomplished by making the proper selections in your print dialog box:

- Print your pages "two-up." That is, print two *Rag* pages on one side of a sheet of paper. Each page will be smaller than the original, but should be fully readable.
- Look for a *Draft* mode setting in your print dialog box. This will print pages more quickly, and use far less ink.
- If your printer allows it, print your pages *double-sided*. Even on printers that lack this feature, it is possible to print all of the odd-numbered pages, and then flip the papers over and re-insert them into the paper tray to print on the back sides. (You're on your own on the specifics of this manual technique—it can be tricky!)

While we're discussing the format of the *Rag*, I wanted to let our sight-impaired readers know that we can offer a special plain text version of the newsletter (no graphics) that can be used by automated readers to provide an audio version of article content. Recipients will be responsible for their own reader program—we simply provide the text file. If you are sight-impaired and require this version of the newsletter, please contact our production editor, Frank Schramm at [wb2pyd@arrl.net](mailto:wb2pyd@arrl.net).

I would like to wish all readers a very Merry Christmas and happy holidays!

## VE NEWS

The October session saw three new Technicians, one upgrade to General and two that upgraded to Extra. Seven members of the VE team assisted with the session.

Congratulations to the following new and upgraded hams:

Matthew Burke	KB3VFE (T)
Stephen Cavilia	KC2ZGU (T)
James Empey	KC2ZGV (T)
Ben Sheron	KC2OTS (G)
William Blitz	N2LZK (E)
Jeffrey Kemp	KC2YSV (E)

Congratulations to all! The next session will be December 18th at 10 AM in RIT Building 9, Room 3139.

[\(click for map\)](#)

Registration starts at 10:00AM. Check the [RARA website](#) for additional information.



## Ham Tech: The QSL Bureau

By Duane Fregoe, K2SI

Confirming a contact or QSO has been part of our hobby from the beginning. Today, if the person you contacted is not using the online Logbook of the World and you need to confirm the contact for an award, plan on sending an actual card. If it was a contact outside of the United States you can send it direct at a cost of around \$3.00 or use a less expensive service known as the "Bureau."

There is the *outgoing* Bureau which is run by the ARRL. A member benefit of the ARRL is the use of the outgoing Bureau service. The ARRL sorts cards from all member hams by DX entity and will send a large stack of cards to the Bureau of the particular entity. The cost is \$5.00 for a half-pound of cards. Approximately 75 cards weigh a half-pound. This is much cheaper than the direct mailing but will also take much longer than the direct mailing. It could take one to two years to get the reply card and in some cases much longer than that. More information on the outgoing Bureau can be found at: <http://www.arrl.org/outgoing-qsl-service>.

It is the *incoming* Bureau that will get the DX entities card to you. The Incoming Bureaus are broken down by the number in your call. In New York we are in the 2<sup>nd</sup> district that is serviced by the North Jersey DX Association. It only costs \$6.00 to start your account with the incoming Bureau. They supply the envelopes and stamps. When a stack of cards builds up for your station they will mail them to you. It is always a thrill to receive an envelope from the Bureau. More information on the incoming Bureau can be found at: <http://www.arrl.org/incoming-qsl-service>.

As you will find out, the Bureau is quite easy to use and very cost effective. Should you decide to use the Bureau don't forget to update your QRZ page and tell the world that the Bureau is an acceptable card exchange method for you. Soon you will be looking forward to the next Bureau envelope.

Next month: Using the eQSL service

### RaRa Club LOGO Items




Don't feel left out- get your RaRa logo items today!

<http://www.rochesterham.org/logo.htm>



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## SKYWARN Recognition Day

By Duane Fregoe, K2SI

SKYWARN Recognition Day will be December 4, 2010 (0000 – 2400 UTC). In local terms it is Friday December 3<sup>rd</sup>, 7:00 PM till Saturday December 4<sup>th</sup>, 7:00 PM. National Weather Service offices across the country will be on the air for 24 hours. The goal is to contact as many offices as possible using repeaters, IRLP, Echolink, and HF.

This is a fun event for new hams that may only have a Technician class license. Many of the weather service offices will be on Echolink and IRLP. The National Weather Service office in Buffalo will be participating again this year. Look for WX2BUF on Echolink and you can also check in on the 145.110 repeater. Submit your total number of weather service office contacts for a certificate from the National Weather Service. More information is available online at <http://www.wrh.noaa.gov/mtr/hamradio/>.

## Member Spotlight: Tim Barrett, K9VB

By Len Crellin, KC2PCD

Welcome to another issue of Member Spotlight. Each month we try to present a new RARA member to highlight. If you have someone you think would be interesting for us to interview, please send me, Len Crellin (kc2pcd@arrl.net), his or her name with a short introduction that we can include with the interview. Any photos or stories we can use will be appreciated too!

Our Ham of the Month for December is Tim Barrett, K9VB. Tim is a relatively new Rochester resident, originally hailing from England, and he has a deep interest in the hobby of amateur radio.

### *How long have you been licensed?*

I was a SWL for many years and then finally licensed in the UK in 1987. In the UK I held calls G7NYA, M5AHV and M0TIM. I'm a life member of RARA since I don't plan on moving away from the area or losing interest in amateur radio!

And why the Illinois call? Well when I came to the US I did not like the call I was allocated. Somebody told me that the region number was meaningless now that Vanity calls allowed anybody to have them so I picked a snappy short one - K9VB. Little did I know that I would be about the only radio ham in the area without a 2 call now that K6PSP has gone back to Scotland! It's a bit of a challenge in the NY QSO Party but I live with it.

### *Did you grow up in Rochester, or are you a "transplant"?*

Well my accent gives me away! I am a Londoner. I met my wife when working in Maryland and she is from Rochester. After 13 years in London she wanted to move back to where her family lives, so we arrived here in 2003.



**Tim Barrett, K9VB tuning the bands at his home QTH**

***What is your career? Does it involve radio/technology?***

I work for a British market research company and head their operations division for TV audience measurement. The US base is in New York City so most Monday mornings see me at Rochester Airport for my weekly commute to the Big Apple. Back on Friday (usually in time for RARA meetings!). That doesn't leave much time for ham radio unfortunately but does make it tempting to get my rig set up for remote operation. I'm part way to doing that.

***What modes/activities haven't you tried yet, which you would like to?***

One day I will pluck up the courage to make a CW QSO.

***Do you have a QSL card to show?***

Printing QSL cards is one chore I haven't got round to yet (I've lived here for seven years so the excuses are wearing thin!) But I am a keen user of Logbook of the World, it's great when you upload a bunch of QSOs and see that some of them are confirmed straightaway. Everybody should do it!

***What are your other hobbies/activities?***

Being relatively new to this area I am captivated by the beauty of upstate NY and love hiking the local trails. Also I'm very interested in astronomy but RARA and the Rochester Astronomy Society both meet on the same night. That's a pity because I think both clubs attract people with similar interests.

***Family overview:***

My wife Judi works for our Village Office in Honeoye Falls and my daughter Emma is studying Computer Science at SUNY Brockport.

***What repeaters do you frequent?***

I'm not very active on VHF. I have occasionally joined the Sunday nets on 146.88.

**Rochester Hamfest 2011:  
Is it the 77th or 88th?**

By Kevin Carey, WB2QMY

One of the many things I learned after watching Ed Gable's presentation of the Fessenden story, is that you can't always believe "established history." In this Old Timer's presentation of a couple of years ago, Ed explored the well known story about inventor Reginald Fessenden's first voice broadcast over radio on Christmas Eve, 1906. For the very first time in history, so the story goes, shipboard wireless operators heard voices and music out of their headsets, instead of just Morse Code. Amazed operators were treated to yet another broadcast a short time later, on New Year's Eve.

The only trouble with this oft-told story is that no historical evidence exists to validate the claim! There are no newspaper articles, no logbooks, and no independent claims to back up what would have been an extremely newsworthy story in its day. According to the best evidence we have, this event never happened, at least did not happen in the way it was originally related to historians. Nevertheless, you can still read today how this "feat" was carried out, and it goes largely unquestioned by most readers. For more on this interesting story, see <http://www.rwonline.com/article/258>.

Although it is on a much smaller scale, the longevity of the Rochester Hamfest has recently been put under the historical microscope. In recent years, we have seen announcements for the 74<sup>th</sup>, 75<sup>th</sup>, and 76<sup>th</sup> annual hamfests in the literature. No one up to this point has questioned those numbers, and by conventional thinking, the 2011 event will be our 77<sup>th</sup> hamfest.

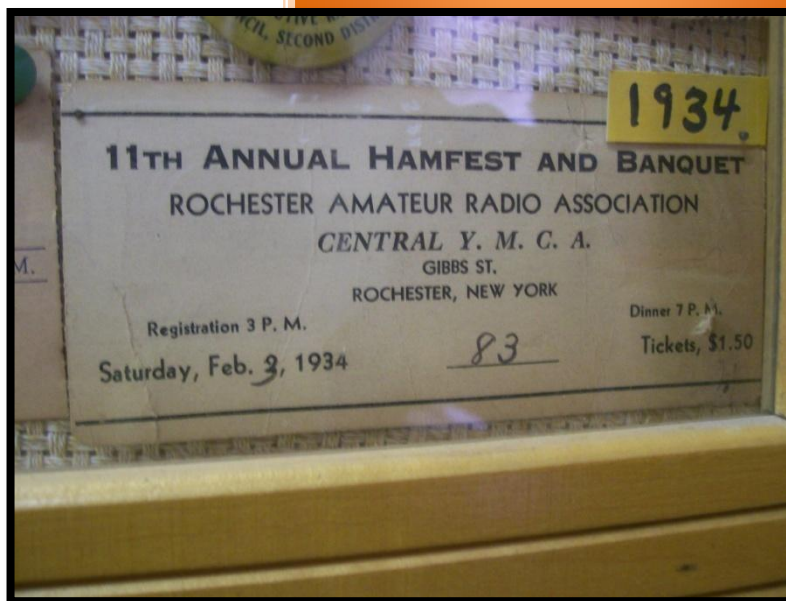
Imagine my surprise while on duty at the AWA museum, when I found a display of an original ticket from the 11th annual Rochester Hamfest in 1934 (see photo below)! Math has never been my strong point, but I started working it out, and realized that based on the ticket, the 2011 hamfest would actually be our 88<sup>th</sup> annual event, not the 77<sup>th</sup> as conventional thinking would dictate!

Further investigation revealed more hamfest tickets on display at the AWA museum. Photos of these are shown below, and here is a summary of what I found:

- 11<sup>th</sup> annual RARA Hamfest in 1934 (Central YMCA)
- 12<sup>th</sup> annual RARA Hamfest in 1935 (Columbus Civic Center)
- 13<sup>th</sup> annual RARA Hamfest in 1936 (Columbus Civic Center)
- 15<sup>th</sup> annual RARA Hamfest in 1938 (Elks Club)
- 1953 annual RARA Hamfest—no Annual year given (Elks Club)

Now, some might say that there could have been years where a hamfest was not held, during the war years, for example, when ham radio activities were curtailed. I can't say for sure, having been born in 1962, but from all of the history I've read, hams during the war were "chomping at the bit" to get back on the air, and filled their time with related activities such as receiver design, and participation in the WERS program, which allowed some limited transmission in support of civil defense. Why, during this time of ham radio "withdrawal," would a hamfest not be held? Even the ARRL published a special edition of its famed *Handbook* during this time. Even if the war did put hamfests on hold, this would not explain an 11-year discrepancy between established thought and the tickets I found.

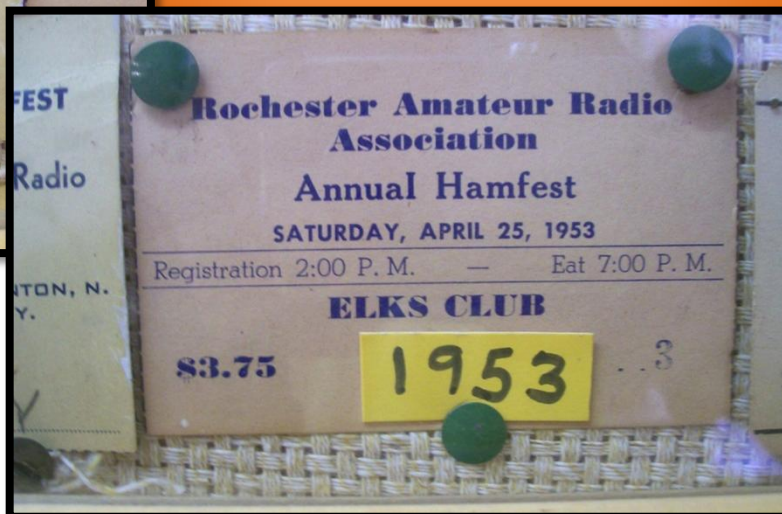
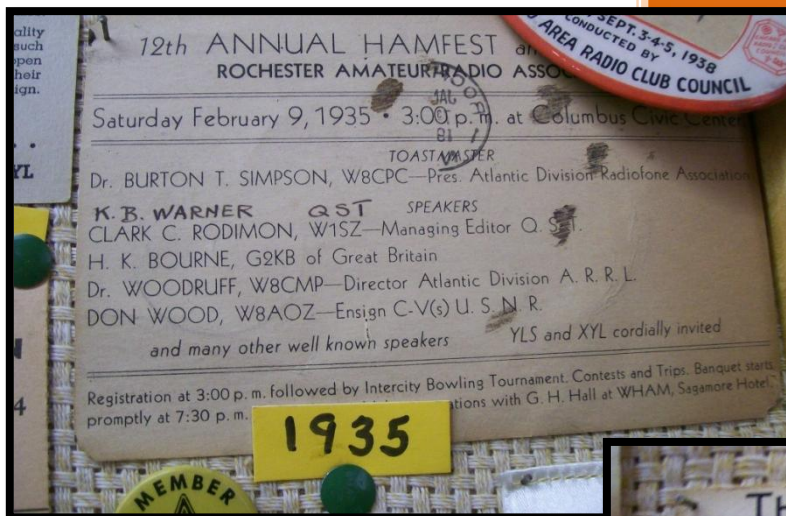
If the new findings are true, RARA will hold the distinction of having one of the longest running hamfests in the entire country. I am stopping short of proclaiming this to be true. I'm simply putting forth these findings for more discussion. I invite others with information or ideas to come forward and join the discussion. In the meantime, if somebody wishes you "88s" between now and June 4<sup>th</sup> 2011, keep in mind that they may be wishing you a happy 88<sup>th</sup> annual Rochester Hamfest!



***The ticket that started it all: It shows the 11<sup>th</sup> annual RARA Hamfest being held in 1934. That would make the 2011 event our 88<sup>th</sup> Hamfest!***



**More Hamfest tickets seen on display at the AWA Museum...**





## Raffle Prizes!

By Dan & Sue Waterstraat, W2DEW & KC2SUE,  
Awards Chairpersons

Hello Raffle fans, it's Christmas time and we have one of the all-time favorite prizes: A LaCrosse Atomic Clock. Some of the features are:

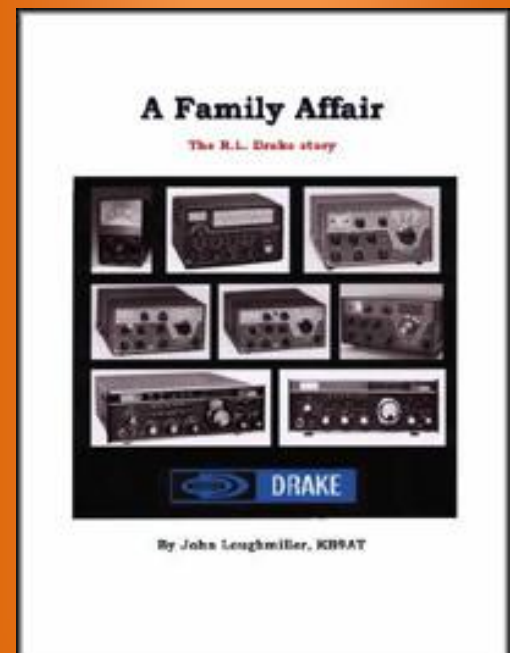
- Brushed-aluminum atomic wall clock with time, date, and temperature functions
- Radio-calibrated to WWVB (60 kHz) for accuracy to within 1 second per year
- Automatic self-adjustment to DST, EST
- Indoor and wireless remote temperature, moon phase readings, and alarm with snooze
- 12 or 24-hour clock modes
- Time zone setting (Including GMT)
- Remote temperature transmission up to 330 feet
- Large Digital Display, Batteries Included

Our second prize is at the other end of the spectrum in technology. This is the XS-402 Little Wonder Crystal Radio Kit. This is a great, easy to build starter kit for the first time builder. It includes a circuit board, all parts, and crystal earphone. Just the thing for learning basic radio theory and NO batteries required! This kit is from the Xtal Set Society. They were kind enough to send along some of their catalogs and newsletters, so stop by and pick one up. Check out their Shortwave Crystal Kit, crystal radio parts, and other unique kits. No, I don't own stock in them!



From the library dept., we have an interesting book for you boatanchor enthusiasts which is the *R. L. Drake Story*. This covers the start of Drake and the people who made it a top ham equipment maker. The development of such popular rigs as the TR-4, R-4C is covered with factory pictures, catalog pages, and complete descriptions of all Drake Ham products. So come on out and have a eyeball QSO with your ham

friends and stop by and see Sue and me for raffle tickets.



## Picture Puzzler

By Kevin Carey, WB2QMY

Welcome to another *Picture Puzzler* column! Last month we featured a mystery photo of an RF-based device with two tubes in it (you can see November's issue in the archives at [www.rochesterham.org](http://www.rochesterham.org)). **Peter Schuch, WB2UAQ**, came up with the correct answer that this was an early transmitter for Radio Controlled (R/C) aircraft! The Gyro Electronics Company produced this transmitter in the 1950s, and at the time it was considered to be a compact unit!

Peter adds: "R/C planes in those days used simple escapement mechanisms requiring only one channel (on or off). By the way, two silent keys, W2CVI and W3NPS (twin brothers), who were Uncle and Father to a friend, WB2PFB, were among the early R/C enthusiasts and their plane hung in the air and space museum in DC for many years with their call signs on the tail."

"Both were WW2 engineering heroes as well. They worked on development radar (W2CVI) and the anti-aircraft 5-inch proximity fuse projectiles (W3NPS). Bill, W2CVI lived near Syracuse for much of his life and Walt, W3NPS lived in or near Baltimore for most of his."

This month's mystery item is pictured below. What is it, and what was it used for? What does "TWR." on the frequency dial stand for? Please send your guesses to [Editor@RochesterHam.org](mailto:Editor@RochesterHam.org). Correct guessers will be credited in the next issue of the *RARA Rag*.

## Science and Technology Fair

Mark Your Calendar...

2010 Holiday Science and Technology Fair at the Rochester Museum & Science Center  
- 657 East Ave. -

Monday - Thursday, Dec. 27th - 30th  
RDXA will be **operating W2RDX for the first 3 days only, Dec. 27-28-29.**





# RARA Academy

Duane Fregoe, K2SI

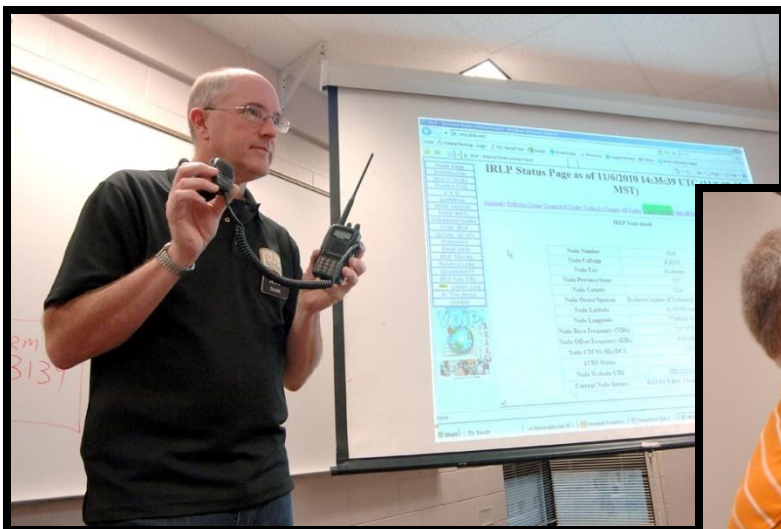
The first RARA Academy took place on November 6, 2010 at RIT. The initial feedback was very positive and plans are already being made for a February Academy with three new topics. 29 people participated in this first Academy and all of them took home a 2-meter antenna that they can use with their HT.

After a brief welcome and introduction it was time for Peter Fournia to get the program started with a presentation on repeaters and some hands-on exercises for those that brought an HT. Peter explained what information is required to work a repeater and where someone can get that information. It was then my turn to present on IRLP. When it came time for the live demo I went to the Alaska Reflector as there were 25 nodes connected to it. We ran into a KL7U (Lonnie Olson) and could not have asked for a more entertaining QSO. Lonnie was explaining to us why the Arctic Circle is a moving target. We saved the best for last since everyone likes a good hands-on project. Ev Tupis along with Kevin Carey pre-packaged a 2-meter antenna kit for each participant. Everyone got to leave with an antenna that they built.

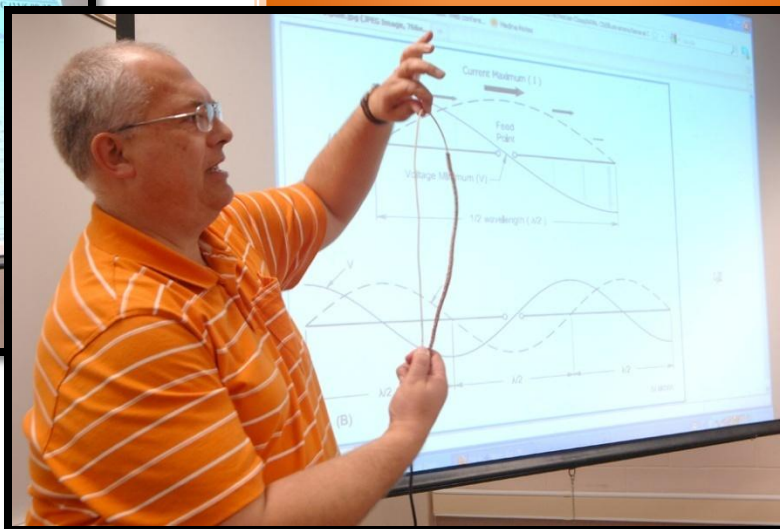
Many thanks to all that presented and others that stopped in to help. We also need to thank the RIT Amateur Radio Club (K2GXT) for the use of their repeater and helping us to secure use of a classroom. For the February Academy we are looking at presentations on APRS and Echolink. A third session will be determined soon.



**Our class of students, ready to build!**  
(Photo by Duane Fregoe, K2SI)



**Duane, K2SI explaining the ins and outs of IRLP**  
Photo courtesy of Anmari Linardi, N2YGG

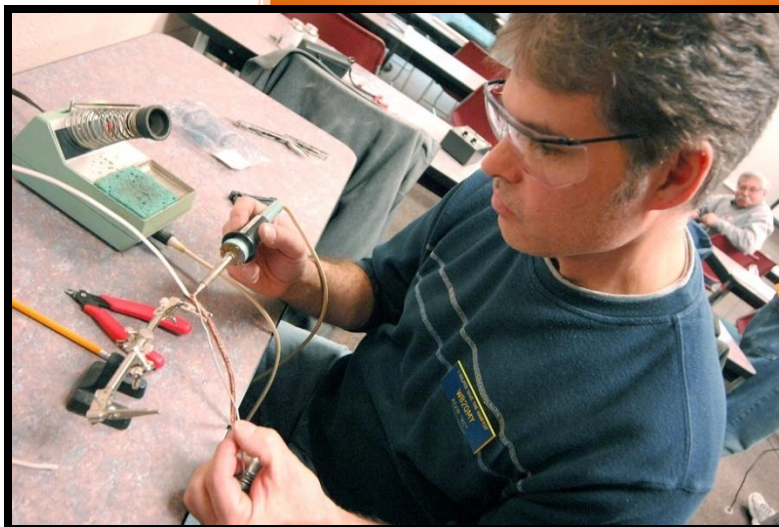


**Ev, W2EV, explaining the 2m sleeve dipole to Academy students**  
Photo courtesy of Anmari Linardi, N2YGG





***Duane, K2SI, assisting with antenna assembly***  
*Photo courtesy of Anmari Linardi, N2YGG*



***Your editor at work, enjoying the scent of rosin core solder!***  
*Photo courtesy of Anmari Linardi, N2YGG*



***Ev, W2EV, demonstrates communication over a light beam with help from a student***  
*Photo courtesy of Anmari Linardi. N2YGG*

## Did You Know?

Did you know that your club's website at [www.rochesterham.org](http://www.rochesterham.org) offers these features and more?...

- ✓ Photos of meetings & events (you might be in there!)
- ✓ Info on upcoming meetings/programs
- ✓ 2011 Hamfest information!
- ✓ Online membership & renewal
- ✓ Public service info & sign-up
- ✓ VE testing info
- ✓ Back issues of the *Rag* in PDF
- ✓ Officer contact info
- ✓ List of past presidents (how many do you remember?)
- ✓ Order RARA logo products (hats, shirts, mugs)
- ✓ Useful Internet links
- ✓ Ham Radio 101—tons of tutorial info, plus net & repeater listings



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RaRa HOME

Rochester Hamfest

Upcoming Meetings

Public Service

Licensing Courses

License Testing

Ham Radio 101

Memorial Scholarship

Membership

Club Officers



### Welcome to RARA

The **Rochester Amateur Radio Association, Inc. (RARA)** is a widely diversified, highly active amateur radio club centered in the Rochester, NY area. We were founded in 1930, and incorporated in September of 1960. Currently with over 575 active members, we are one of the largest Amateur Radio clubs in North America, attracting international members from near and far.

We are an American Radio Relay League (ARRL) affiliated club since 1931, and a charter Special Service Organization, **RARA** provides a unifying focal point for much of the amateur radio activity in Western New York.

#### New at RARA on the web:

- RARA Academy - Download the flyer and RSVP TODAY!
- New: Updated Rochester area Repeater Listing
- Fall program listing updated.
- Fall Licensing courses - Register now!
- Newest photo gallery posted. Have some fun: Make your own comments and captions!



**W2KRH**  
For information contact:  
[ken@chairmkr.com](mailto:ken@chairmkr.com)  
Windsor Chairs handmade  
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by a craftsman trained at  
The Windsor Institute.

# Digital Scanner Listening

Jim Sutton, N2OPS

Those listening to Monroe County law enforcement frequencies recently found the transmissions were all abuzz. Rochester Police, Monroe County Sheriff as well as village and town police had switched to P25 (Project 25) digital mode.

Why the change? The radio spectrum is getting more and more crowded. The FCC has directed all land mobile radio services move to narrow band 12.5 KHz or digital mode by 2013. These changes allow more users in the same amount of spectrum. Monroe County chose to move law enforcement to P25. Unlike nearly all P25 systems which are trunked, Monroe County retained the conventional 460 MHz frequencies.

P25 is a digital standard created by APCO. This standard was to ensure interoperability between agencies. The technology was made available to scanner manufacturers so that no one would be shut out of listening (<http://www.apco911.org/frequency/project25.php>). Both scanners to listen in and the two-way equipment are far more expensive than the narrow band option that was chosen by Monroe County Fire and EMS agencies. These can be heard on conventional scanner, but with slightly reduced volume. An excellent P25 training guide is available at <http://www.danielselectronics.com/pdfs/P25%20Training%20Guide.pdf>

A limited number of amateur repeaters are P25 capable. This alternative to D Star is shown on the 146.615 VE3WAS NAC: \$293 in Toronto. [www.repeaterbook.com](http://www.repeaterbook.com) shows 41 P25 repeaters in the US and Canada. P25 amateur radio operators must use expensive commercial radio equipment. Hopefully some day P25 technology will be incorporated into at least the receive side of amateur radios. Until amateur radios incorporate P25 technology we have scanner radios available from Uniden, GRE and Radio Shack. Programming software makes programming a breeze. I have had great success with Butel Software <http://www.butel.nl/start.html>

Down the road, Ontario County will take all of their public safety to P25 [http://www.pspc.harris.com/news/view\\_pressrelease.asp?act=lookup&pr\\_id=3086](http://www.pspc.harris.com/news/view_pressrelease.asp?act=lookup&pr_id=3086), and Monroe County plans to upgrade to a more advanced system <http://www.digitalcommunities.com/articles/New-Yorks-Monroe-County-to-Deploy.html>

New York State agencies came uncomfortably close to a communications blunder with plans for an Open Sky system. The M/A-COM systems were subject to repeated failures throughout the US. Thankfully, New York State realized the dangers of this system and pulled the plug <http://www.nytimes.com/2009/01/16/nyregion/16wireless.html> I am unable to find any reference to how New York State plans to comply with the needed changes to be made by 2013.

Other P25 users in the Rochester area include NYSEG and the Federal Protective Service. An excellent source of digital and conventional scanner listening information is available on <http://www.radioreference.com/>. I'm looking forward to sharing more about the world of scanner listening. If you have any suggestions or topics please email them to me at [jim@n2ops.net](mailto:jim@n2ops.net).



The only thing digital on the Bearcat III was the on /off switch!



While the only thing analog on a modern scanner probably comes out of the speaker.



## Monroe County ARES / RACES News

By Jim DiTucci, N2IXD

Monroe County Amateur Radio Emergency Service, Inc. holds its meetings on the fourth Thursday of each month at the Rochester Chapter of the American Red Cross.



**NOTE:** There will not be a meeting in December. See you on Thursday, January 27, 2011.

The next ARES Meeting will be held on:  
Thursday, January 27, 2011  
Time: 7:00 PM

Meetings are held at Red Cross HQ, 50 Prince Street, Rochester. Prince Street is just west of the Auditorium Theatre and runs south from East Main St. Talk-in: 146.61 MHz. (-)

110.9 Hz pl.

ARES NET: Monroe County ARES/RACES meets on the air every Thursday of the month at 9:00 pm, on the 146.61 MHz. (-) 110.9 Hz pl repeater. The only exception to that are nights when we hold our regular meeting, generally on the 4th Thursday of the month. See our website for complete information at: <http://www.monroecountymemcomm.org/>.

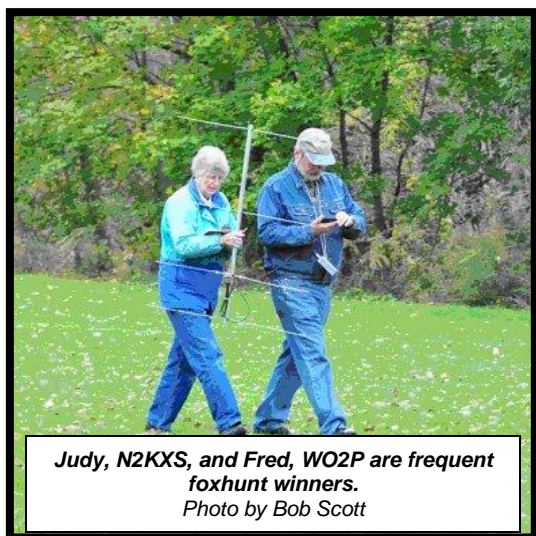


## Foxhunt Results

Jon Dickason, N2JAC  
(XARC Huntmaster)

Xerox Amateur Radio Club's (XARC) annual fall hidden transmitter hunt began on a chilly October Saturday morning with a mysterious title of "geofoxblackcachehuntjack" and a set of longitude and latitude coordinates.

My fellow huntmaster Bob Scott and I had worked for weeks to plan a hunt that would be challenging for veteran hunters, but not too intimidating for beginners. While scouting for hiding spots, I forgot to turn off my APRS beacon, so I was worried that someone might have seen me driving around Gates weeks before the hunt. Bob scrounged up a pelican case to be the geocache. To get my camouflaged beam higher up in the trees, I made a ladder out of 2x4s that I had to trim to fit in my tiny car.



*Judy, N2KXS, and Fred, WO2P are frequent foxhunt winners.  
Photo by Bob Scott*

Luckily, on hunt day, everyone figured out how to navigate to the starting point of Spring Lake park in Penfield, where they practiced close-in hunting of Fred, WO2P's, microfox. Bill, KC2YPJ, is a first-time hunter, so he got some body fade lessons and a chance to practice his technique.

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**For information contact:  
Dave Powelczyk, N2BMC**

**315-324-5612 (Summer)  
315-486-5502 (Winter)**

The official hunt began with an index card revealing the first fox frequency, and advising hunters to not give away the fox's location once found. Five teams were up to the challenge, and within 20 minutes all had found the first fox hidden in a tree near the creek in the park. Each got a card from the fox



**Bob, K2OID, assembling his antenna**  
Photo by Bob Scott

that had coordinates to a geocache, the frequency of the main hidden transmitter, and instructions to take a playing card from each of the two locations to build a blackjack hand. As the day got warmer and sunnier, all the teams headed to the geocache located in Durand Eastman park near the golf course. All five teams found the cache and got their first playing card.

The main fox signal was

not detectable from the start (as designed), but from the geocache all teams heard it and began the second direction finding activity.

'Foxhunt adrenaline' adversely affected a couple teams that day. One hunter left an antenna at the start and had to meet up with the huntmasters to retrieve it, delaying his main direction finding by several crucial minutes. Another hunter was closing in on the main fox when he locked his keys in his car, also delaying his hunt significantly.

As clues were given on the Xerox repeater every 30 minutes, the teams headed southwest from Durand park. Most found their way to Gates Memorial Park between Lyell Ave and Trolley Blvd., where the 7 watt 146.565 transmitter was hidden in the woods with a directional antenna about 15 feet up in a tree. The back entrance to the park was accessible from Fox Run road, a fact that was not lost on the huntmasters, as the final clue was 'look for the fox in the street name'.



**Brian, K2AS (holding antenna), and his son Greg have been hunting for more than 10 years at the XARC foxhunts.**  
Photo by Bob Scott

Brian, K2AS, and his son came in first place with a perfect blackjack hand with an ace from the transmitter and a king from the cache. Peter W2SKY came in second with a 9 card from the cache. He eventually found the fox as I was retrieving it from the woods. Bob, K2OID, and Ned, W2NED, placed 3rd with a 6 of hearts. Fred, WO2P, and Judy, N2KXS, had a pair of twos for fourth place. Bill, KC2YPJ, the rookie hunter, was brave (or foolish) enough to accept my invitation where I announce that the fox can be hunted with just an HT and a rubber duck antenna. Even though all the other teams had directional antennas (and usually a partner), using just his newly learned body fade technique and his stock ht and antenna, Bill found both transmitters, a feat that not even some of the experienced teams could duplicate that day.

A good time was had by all. Most of us met for lunch to receive awards (customized navigation compasses) and stories of 'the fox that got away'. XARC's annual Spring Foxhunt is usually held in May around Mother's Day and/or Worldwide Foxhunting Weekend, and all are welcome to hunt. All you need is a 2-meter receiver (really!).

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## RaRa Rag 20 Years Ago, November 1990

By Ed Gable, K2MP  
RaRa Historian



The December, 1990, meeting had a presenter familiar to most of us, but the subject was not. It was also the annual joint meeting with the Kodak Park ARC held in Bldg 28 at Kodak Park. Judith Stonehill, N2KXS, spoke on her interesting experiences with bio-acoustic work with whales. Her work on digitizing the sound of whales as their surroundings change led to further tools for biologist in their study of marine mammals. That article, plus K2MP's "20 year" column was the total RaRa content of the *Rag*. One half page out of eight pages! The rest was just filler from news services. Support your Club and it's fine newsletter. Write something and send it in.

With regret it was reported that Ed Mahar WB2ZJY, Robert Phelps WB2DPT and Joseph Phillips W2DHV were Silent Keys. Many of you remember Joe Phillips as the code instructor for RaRa's Code and Theory classes. From the Want Ads you could buy a 50 foot tower with tri-band Yagi, complete with a 3 bedroom Colonial house attached, from Jim, WB2WWV. Patrick Moyer (sk) N2AIW, Attorney at Law, was the only advertiser.

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 Education Coordinator ..... TBA  
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 RaRa RAG Layout Editor ..... Frank Schramm, WB2PYD  
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 Webmaster ..... Frank Schramm, WB2PYD

RaRa meets on the first Friday of each month  
 from September through May. Come join us at:

**Henrietta Fire Company No.1**  
**3129 East Henrietta Rd.**  
**Henrietta, NY 14467**

[Get Directions](#)

## **Rochester Area Radio Club Contacts**

### **Antique Wireless Association (AWA)**

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### **Drumlins Amateur Radio Club Ltd. (DARC)**

Bob Taylor, N2MLD ..... [n2mld@juno.com](mailto:n2mld@juno.com)

### **Fisherman's Net Amateur Radio Club**

Jim Sutton, N2OPS ..... [jim@otrym.org](mailto:jim@otrym.org)

### **Genesee Valley Amateur Radio Assn**

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### **Rochester DX Association (RDXA)**

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### **Rochester Radio Repeater Association (RRRA)**

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### **Rochester VHF Group (RVHFG)**

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### **Squaw Island Amateur Radio Club (SIARC)**

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### **XEROX Amateur Radio Club (XARC)**

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**January Rag Deadline**  
**December 17, 2010**

